8. (New) Process according to Claim 1, wherein said fibre material includes glass fibres.

Remarks

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended. Claims 7 and 8 have been added. Attached is an appendix showing the revisions made relative to the previous version of the claims. Claims 1-6 are pending in the patent application.

1. Abstract

The patent application has been amended to include an abstract as required by 37 CFR 1.72(b). No new matter has been added. An abstract on a separate sheet is attached.

2. IDS references

A copy of each of the references listed in the IDS (Form PTO-1449) that was submitted with the previous communication is enclosed herewith. A post card receipt (copy enclosed) returned from the PTO indicates that the references were received by the PTO with the previous communication.

3. Section 112, second paragraph, rejection

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, on indefiniteness grounds. Claim 2 as amended incorporates the change suggested by the Examiner, thereby rendering the indefiniteness rejection moot.

4. Section 112, first paragraph rejections

Claims 1 and 3-6 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, on the grounds the specification "while being enabling for the use of a fiber fleece as the covering layer, does not reasonably provide enablement for the use of any 'fiber

material.'" Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the following comments.

As described in applicants' specification, a covering layer of fibre and melamine is applied over particulate fibre aluminum oxide that has been spread onto a patterned or decorative paper. The function of this covering layer is to prevent or reduce the abrading of pressing plates or pressing bands that occurred in the prior art processes that produced decorative laminate coatings including particulate aluminum oxide for improved wear of the laminate coating. Although cellulose fibers are specifically referenced, those skilled in the relevant art will appreciate that other types of fibers may be used to practice the process set forth in the claims. Moreover, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the fiber containing melamine resin may be applied not only to provide a covering layer of fiber fleece containing the melamine, but also in other albeit less desirable forms. Rather, the focus is on providing a covering layer that includes fiber material which will prevent the particulate aluminum oxide from migrating to the surface of the laminate coating during fabrication. For at least the foregoing reasons, withdrawal of the non-enablement rejection is respectfully requested.

5. Prior art rejections

All of the claims stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious based on Watson et al. in view of Holtschmidt et al., or alternatively, based on Holtschmidt et al. in view of Watson et al. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the amendment to claim 1 and the following comments.

Claim 1 recites a process for producing a laminate coating, comprising the steps of spreading particulate fine aluminum oxide onto a still wet patterned or decorative paper that has been impregnated with a melamine resin. The paper is then pre-dried or pre-condensed, and then there is applied onto the pre-treated paper a covering layer of fibre material containing melamine resin. Since the covering layer overlies the patterned or decorative paper, it is transparent to permit viewing of the patterned or decorative paper, as has now been made clear by the amendment of claim 1.

The Watson et al. patent is directed to the production of plastics having a paper base and, more particularly, to incorporating a gritty mineral material such as sand, gravel or emery between two plies of paper so as to prevent lateral delamination of the plies. Paper generally is not transparent, nor do Watson et al. disclose or suggest any reason for the paper plies thereof to be transparent. In fact, Watson states that the "pulp used is similar to that used in the manufacture of Kraft paper" (Watson, page 2, lines 5-6). Kraft paper is usually brown in color and opaque.

As observed by the Examiner, the Holtschmidt et al. patent is directed to a resin impregnated paper that may be provided with a decorative or ornamental surface printing. Although Holmschmidt et al. also disclose subjecting the paper to two or more resin impregnating steps and drying steps, it is devoid of any disclosure of how to provide a wear resistant material therein.

The Examiner opines that it would have been obvious to the skilled person to employ the decorative ply and M-F resin of Holschmidt et al. in the process taught by Watson et al. in place of the corresponding, analogous materials (i.e., paper and U-F resin impregnant) employed therein. For motivation, the Examiner states that "(A) the use of such decorative paper sheets is fairly documented as being both known and conventional to those of ordinary skill in this art (e.g. to constitute a matter of obvious and alternative choice and/or expedience to those so skilled); (B) both U-F and M-F resins are encompassed within the scope and definition of the term "aminoplast resin" and also that both of these resins are known and appreciated (e.g. by this art) to constitute so-called "noble resins" (i.e. transparent when ultimately cured); mere substitution of one known set of material elements for another such set (and in/from a most similar if not identical environment) involved."

However, the teachings of Watson et al. do not lend themselves to this adaptation. For instance, Watson et al. is concerned with interlocking two plies of paper to prevent delaminations, the interlock being provided by sand or gravel. As paper and particularly kraft paper is generally opaque, the skilled person would not be inclined to substitute a decorative paper for the lower paper ply to which the sand or

gravel is applied. If anything, the skilled person might at least consider using a decorative paper as the outer paper ply where it can be seen, but then the resultant process would be distinctly different from that claimed.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that the art rejection be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

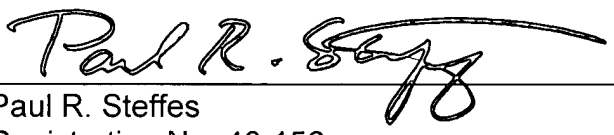
6. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early indication to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should a petition for an Extension of Time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary) petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988 under Attorney Docket No. TURKP0113US.

Respectfully submitted,

RENNER, OTTO, BOISSELLE & SKLAR, L.L.P.

By 

Paul R. Steffes
Registration No. 43,156

1621 Euclid Ave. - 19th Floor
Cleveland, Ohio 44116
(216) 621-1113

APPENDIX

In the claims:

Please amend claims 1 and 2 as follows:

1. (Amended) A process for producing laminate coatings comprising the steps of:
   a) Taking a wet patterned or decorative paper impregnated with a melamine resin;
   b) spreading particulate fine aluminum oxide (corundum) onto the still wet paper before drying to pre-treat said paper;
   c) pre-drying or pre-condensing said paper;
   d) applying a covering layer of fibre material containing melamine resin onto said pre-treated paper; and
   e) finally drying the whole, with the covering layer being transparent for viewing of the patterned or decorative paper.

2. (Amended) Process according to Claim 1, wherein said fibre material is formed as [comprises] a fibre fleece containing melamine resin [is applied to the decorative paper as the covering layer].

7. (New) Process according to Claim 1, wherein said fibre material includes cellular fibres.

8. (New) Process according to Claim 1, wherein said fibre material includes glass fibres.